

***What is claimed is:***

1. A file management system for managing multiple versions of electronic files on one or more volumes, the file management system comprising:  
  
a volume manager that manages the electronic files and metadata relating to such files on one or more volumes; and  
  
version control means for automatically managing versions of an electronic file through the file management system based on opening, saving and changing of a file.
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a user interface that enables a user to view, within the file management system, one or more versions of the electronic files.
3. The system of claim 1, further comprising means for automatic versioning in the file system based on opening, changing and saving file in its native application.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the system is transactionally based wherein for each version of the files, the system keeps a record of what was done, by whom, when, why and other desired information.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein the system is transactionally based, and the system further comprises a show history feature.
6. The system of claim 5, further comprising a view history feature that enables a user to view what used to be in folder but was deleted or moved.

7. The system of claim 5, wherein the user interface enables a user to open and explore what used to be in a folder but was deleted or moved and to Undelete or Bring Back changed content.
8. The system of claim 5, further comprising an Undo feature.
9. The system of claim 8, wherein the Undo feature includes a dialog box in the user interface that brings up changes to a file or folder and an option to undo one or more changes to a file, folder or folder hierarchies.
10. The system of claim 5, wherein the system enables an As of View.
11. The system of claim 1, further comprising means for enabling a user to freeze files or folders such that a user cannot modify such files or folders, and cannot modify tags associated with the frozen files or folders.
12. The system of claim 1, further comprising means for enabling a user to freeze files or folders and further comprising the use of hash codes to verify the integrity of frozen content.
13. The system of claim 1, further comprising a version control feature, wherein the version control feature includes a Show Versions feature that displays all past versions, frozen files and provides a make current option.
14. The system of claim 1, further comprising a version control feature, wherein the version control feature includes a Snapshot feature that copies, freezes and associates with past versions, who, when, and why changes were made.

15. The system of claim 1, wherein said version control means automatically manages copies of an electronic file through the file management system.
16. The system of claim 15, wherein the copies include Smart Copies, Live Copies, and Deferred Copies.
17. The system of claim 16, wherein Live Copies of files A and B initially refer to the same underlying data, and changes in one are reflected immediately in the other; and deleting one has no effect on the other.
18. The system of claim 15, wherein the copies can be on different volumes and managed via the coherency manager.
19. The system of claim 17, wherein Live Copies of folders or files are treated as one object with common metadata and version history regardless of location or number of copies.
20. The system of claim 17, wherein Deferred Copies of Files A and B are used when a “regular” copy is requested so that initially the volume manager knows A and B refer to the same file and initially share the same data, but when one is modified, the Volume Manager makes a copy of the underlying data and then each file has its own separate data.
21. The system of claim 15, wherein the system only allocates new space for a file or folder when a new/modified copy is needed.
22. The system of claim 15, wherein the copies share previous version history.

23. The system of claim 15, wherein a user can copy a past version of A to a new file C, and wherein A and C will share the same version history up to the point where a copy was made.
24. The system of claim 1, wherein the system maintains and displays a hierarchy of versions, including modifications.
25. The system of claim 1, wherein the system maintains and displays hierarchy of copies.
26. The system of claim 1, wherein a versions feature enables versions to be marked as special, enables versions to appear in folders as regular files and icons in a user interface show which files are versions.
27. The system of claim 1, wherein a versions feature enables old versions to be displayed only upon request.
28. The system of claim 1, wherein a versions feature enables new versions to inherit metadata from previous files.
29. The system of claim 1, wherein a versions feature enables files to be frozen when versioned or by user when desired.
30. The system of claim 1, further comprising a repository folder that manages automatic file check-out and check-in.
31. The system of claim 1, wherein the system automatically renames an old version of a file or folder to prevent naming collisions.

32. The system of claim 1, wherein the system maintains and displays a copy pedigree that is used to track copies and versions of files.